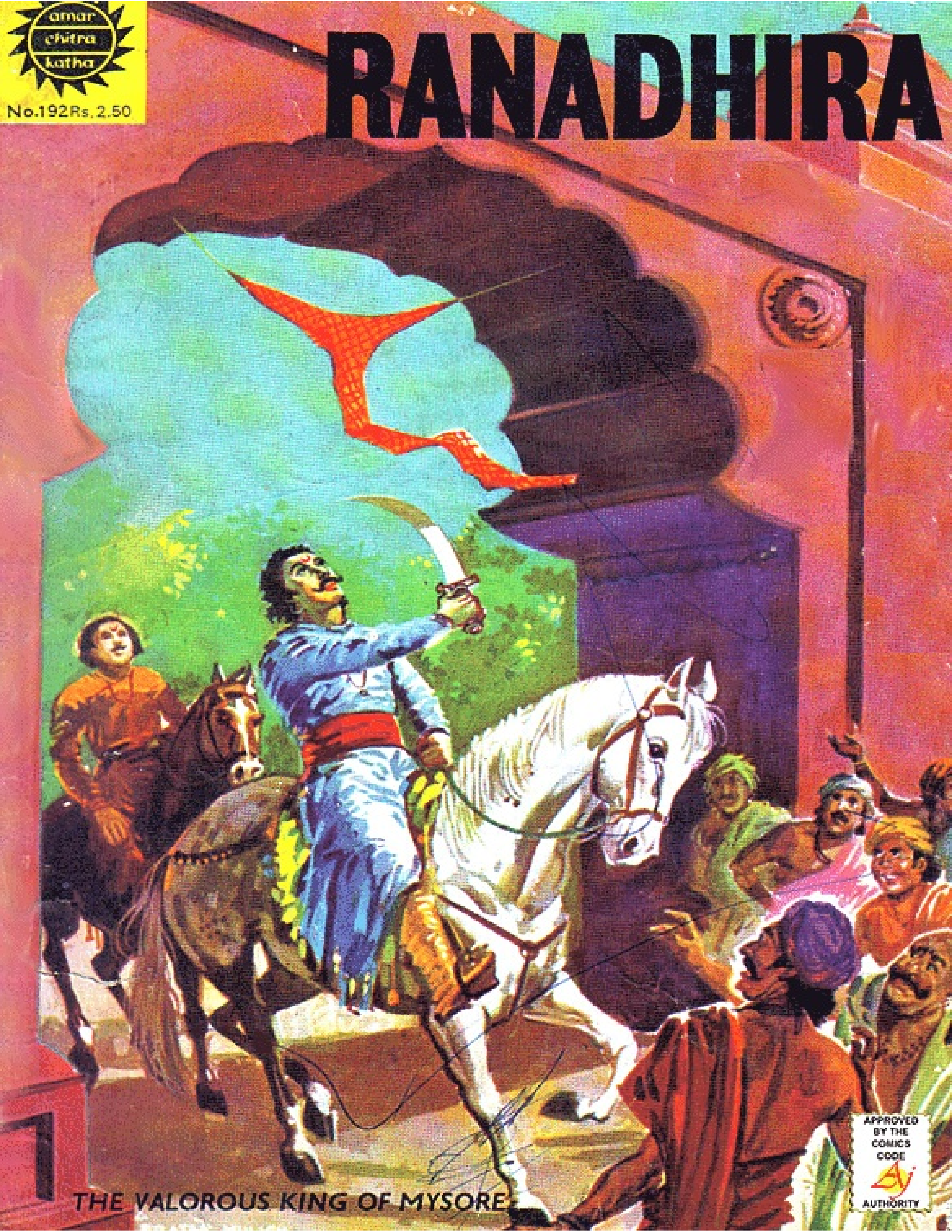

amar chitra katha
No.192 Rs. 2.50
RANADHIRA
THE VALOROUS KING OF MYSORE
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

Ranadhira Kanthirava Narasaraja Wadeyar (1638-1659), king of Mysore, was a popular ruler who introduced many reforms. To this day, many tales are told of his extraordinary strength, keen intellect and generosity. It was during his reign that Mysore became a major power in the South.

Before Ranadhira succeeded to the throne, he had to deal with the wicked and ambitious Vikramaraya, the Dalwai, or chief minister, of the kingdom.

The material for this Amar Chitra Katha has been drawn from the account given by Lt. Col. Mark Wilks in his *History of Mysore* and from *Vamshavali*, a work in Kannada published by the Mysore Palace.

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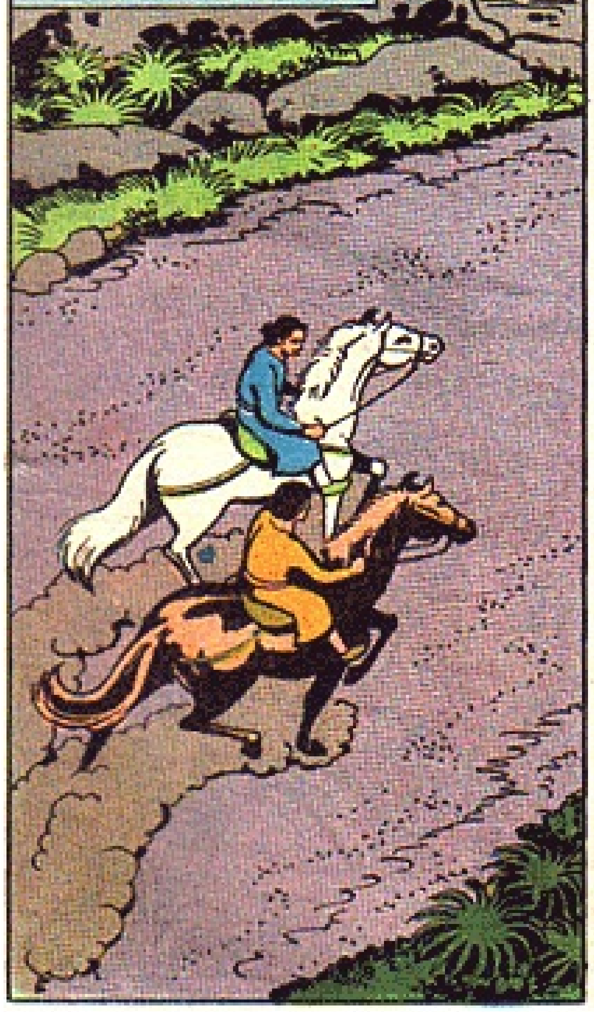

RANADHIRA
THE CHIEFTAIN OF TIRUCHIRAPALLI WAS A GREAT PATRON OF WRESTLING.
BRAVO, MAHAMALLA. IS THERE ANYONE MIGHTIER THAN YOU?
I DON'T THINK SO. BUT WHY DON'T YOU FIND OUT?


HOW?
MY LOIN-CLOTH SHOULD BE HUNG OVER THE GATEWAY OF THE FORT, AS A CHALLENGE.
THE ONE WHO DARES MEET ME IN THE RING WILL REMOVE IT.
I SHOULD KEEP THIS MIGHTY WRESTLER HAPPY. I'D BETTER HUMOUR HIM.
I ACCEPT YOUR SUGGESTION.

THE WRESTLER'S LOIN-CLOTH WAS HUNG ON THE GATEWAY MUCH TO THE DISTASTE OF THE POPULACE—



ONE DAY, TWO TRAVELLERS CAME RIDING BY.



THEY WERE ABOUT TO ENTER THE FORT WHEN THEY PULLED TO A HALT.

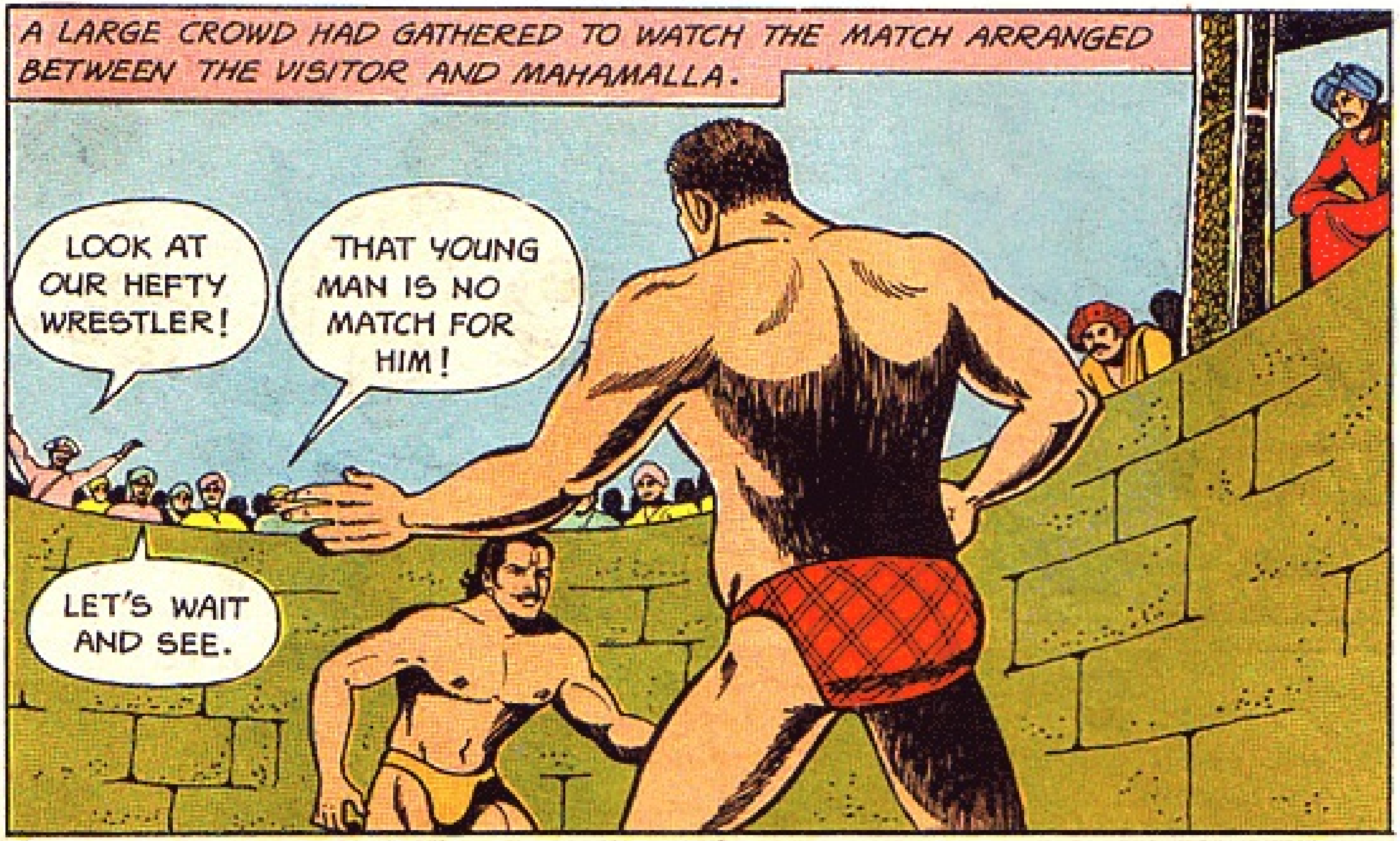


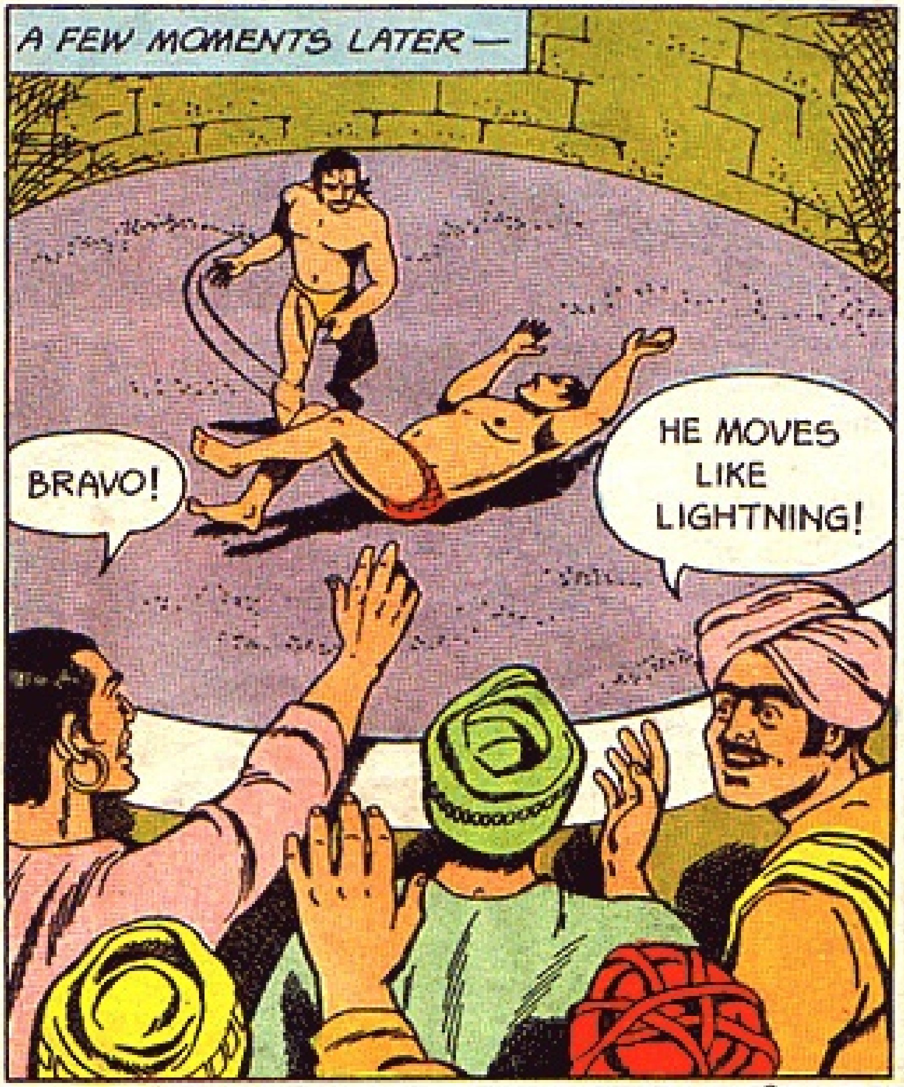

BUT THE YOUNG HOTHEAD PAID NO HEED TO THE WARNING.



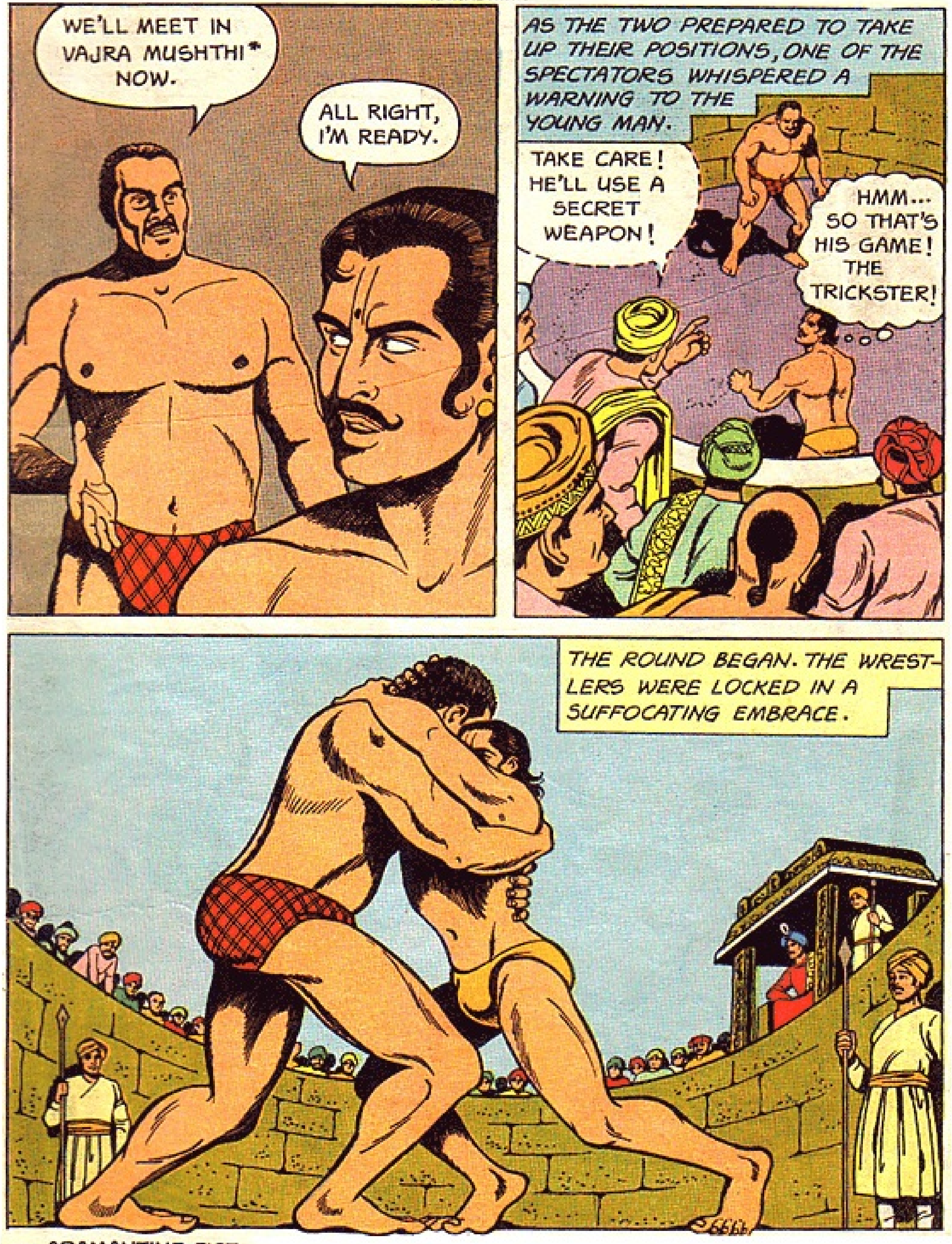

GREAT WAS THE EXCITEMENT AS THE NEWS SPREAD LIKE WILDFIRE.
HE JUST CUT DOWN THE CLOTH EVEN THOUGH HE KNEW OF MAHA-MALLA'S CHALLENGE.
WHAT COURAGE!
BUT HIS DAYS ARE NUMBERED; MAHAMALLA WILL CRUSH HIM.


MEANWHILE THE PALACE GUARDS HAD CLOSED IN ON THE YOUNG MAN.
IF THIS IS AN ATTACK, WE ARE READY TO FIGHT!
YOU ARE MISTAKEN, STRANGER. WE HAVE BEEN SENT BY OUR CHIEFTAIN TO ESCORT YOU TO HIS COURT.
AH, IN THAT CASE, WE ARE HONOURED!
AT THE CHIEFTAIN'S PALACE—
STRANGER, WHEN YOU PULLED THE LOIN-CLOTH OFF THE GATE YOU SIGNED YOUR DEATH WARRANT!
THAT REMAINS TO BE SEEN.


A LARGE CROWD HAD GATHERED TO WATCH THE MATCH ARRANGED BETWEEN THE VISITOR AND MAHAMALLA.
LOOK AT OUR HEFTY WRESTLER!
THAT YOUNG MAN IS NO MATCH FOR HIM!
LET'S WAIT AND SEE.


A FEW MOMENTS LATER—
BRAVO!
HE MOVES LIKE LIGHTNING!


HE'S CLEVER, THIS YOUNG MAN! BUT I KNOW ONE TRICK THAT WILL FINISH HIM OFF!



* ADAMANTINE FIST

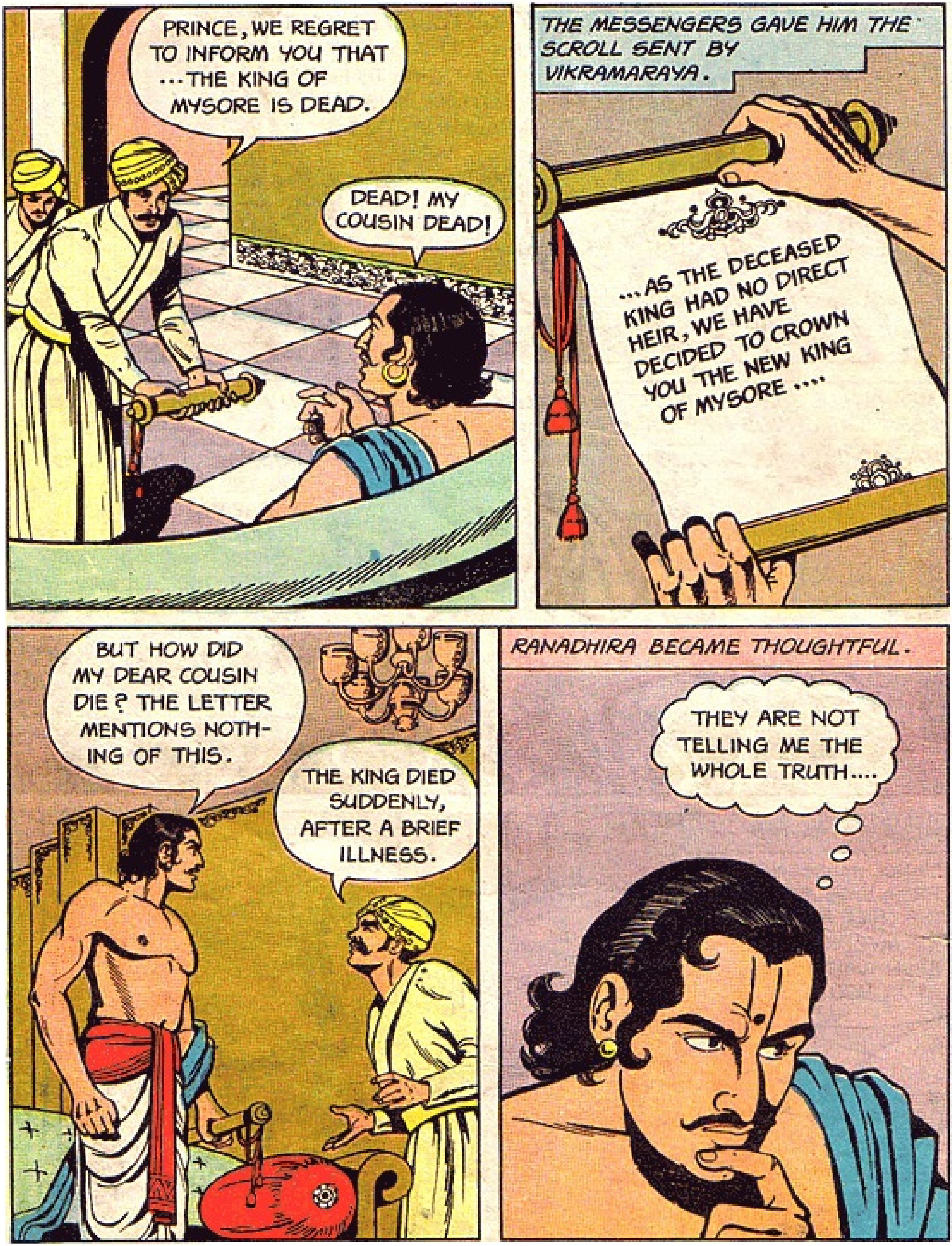

BUT SECONDS LATER THE YOUNG WRESTLER HAD SMOOTHLY STEPPED BACK —
WHY HAVE YOU STOPPED?
IN ANSWER, THE YOUNG MAN SNATCHED A SPEAR FROM ONE OF THE GUARDS ...
... AND LIGHTLY TAPPED THE WRESTLER'S HEAD WITH IT.
OH, GOD!


OUR WICKED WRESTLER USED TO PLAY PRECISELY THE SAME TRICK ON OTHERS.
SMOOTH WORK!
WHEN DID HE CUT MAHAMALLA'S THROAT? WE DIDN'T SEE HIM DO IT!
IN THE CONFUSION THAT FOLLOWED THE VISITOR QUIETLY SLIPPED AWAY.
THE CHIEFTAIN WAS VERY ANGRY.
WHERE HAS HE GONE? BRING HIM HERE AT ONCE!
AFTER A FUTILE SEARCH AN OFFICER CAME TO REPORT.
HE HAS VANISHED. BUT HE HAS LEFT A MESSAGE ON THE WALL OF THE FORT.

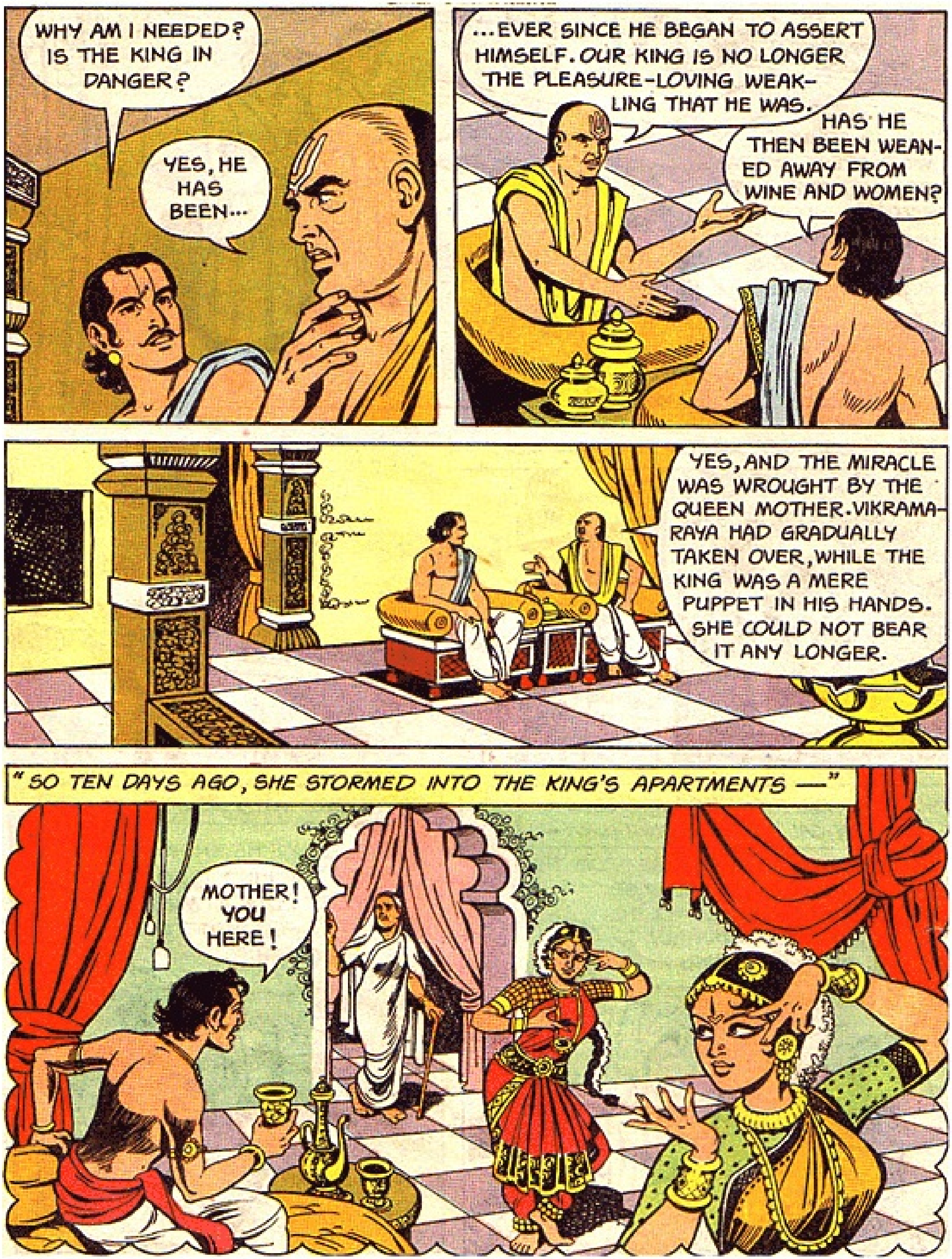

THE CHIEFTAIN RODE UP TO THE ENTRANCE OF THE FORT.
THE MAN WHO KILLED THAT ARROGANT VILLAIN IS A COMMON WRESTLER FROM MYSORE
HE IS NO COMMON WRESTLER! WHO COULD HE REALLY BE?
THERE IS ONLY ONE WRESTLER AS SKILFUL AS THIS ...
...RANADHIRA NARASARAJA, THE COUSIN OF THE KING OF MYSORE.



* A PLACE NEAR MYSORE CITY

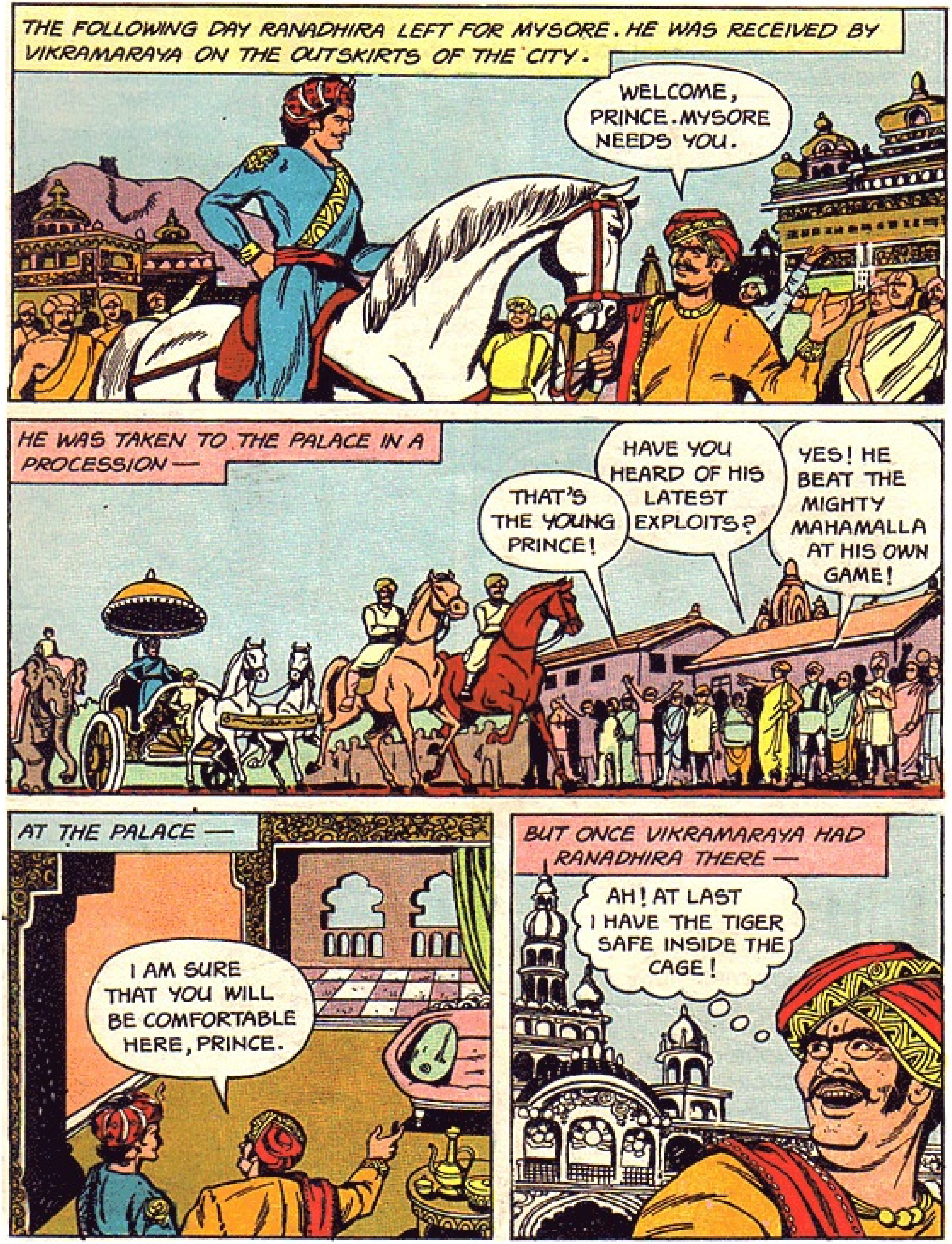

PRINCE, WE REGRET TO INFORM YOU THAT ...THE KING OF MYSORE IS DEAD.
DEAD! MY COUSIN DEAD!
THE MESSENGERS GAVE HIM THE SCROLL SENT BY VIKRAMARAYA.
...AS THE DECEASED KING HAD NO DIRECT HEIR, WE HAVE DECIDED TO CROWN YOU THE NEW KING OF MYSORE....
BUT HOW DID MY DEAR COUSIN DIE? THE LETTER MENTIONS NOTHING OF THIS.
THE KING DIED SUDDENLY, AFTER A BRIEF ILLNESS.
RANADHIRA BECAME THOUGHTFUL.
THEY ARE NOT TELLING ME THE WHOLE TRUTH....


PLEASE CONVEY MY DEEPEST SYMPATHIES TO THE QUEEN MOTHER. INFORM VIKRAMARAYA THAT I'LL BE IN MYSORE WITHIN TWO DAYS.
THE MESSENGERS LEFT TERAKANAMBI.
SOON AFTER THEIR DEPARTURE, A BRAHMAN CALLED ON RANADHIRA—
PRINCE, I BRING A MESSAGE FROM THE QUEEN MOTHER. SHE BEGS YOU TO PROCEED TO THE CAPITAL IMMEDIATELY TO HELP THE YOUNG KING.
WHAT!
RANADHIRA WAS PERPLEXED.
DOESN'T HE KNOW THAT THE KING IS NO LONGER ALIVE? I MUST GET TO THE BOTTOM OF THIS.


WHY AM I NEEDED? IS THE KING IN DANGER?
YES, HE HAS BEEN...
...EVER SINCE HE BEGAN TO ASSERT HIMSELF. OUR KING IS NO LONGER THE PLEASURE-LOVING WEAKLING THAT HE WAS.
HAS HE THEN BEEN WEANED AWAY FROM WINE AND WOMEN?
YES, AND THE MIRACLE WAS WROUGHT BY THE QUEEN MOTHER. VIKRAMARAYA HAD GRADUALLY TAKEN OVER, WHILE THE KING WAS A MERE PUPPET IN HIS HANDS. SHE COULD NOT BEAR IT ANY LONGER.
"SO TEN DAYS AGO, SHE STORMED INTO THE KING'S APARTMENTS —"
MOTHER! YOU HERE!


SON, YOU HAVE FORGOTTEN YOUR DUTIES TO YOUR PEOPLE AND THE STATE! YOU HAVE BETRAYED THE TRUST PLACED IN YOU BY YOUR FATHER! YOU ARE UNFIT TO RULE!
"THE KING BECAME AWARE OF HIS RESPONSIBILITIES AND BEGAN TO LEAD A NEW LIFE. HE PAID A SURPRISE VISIT TO THE TREASURY."
LET ME SEE THE INVENTORY. OPEN THE TREASURY DOORS.
YES, YOUR MAJESTY.
"HE FOUND THERE WAS A HUGE DEFICIT."
WE ARE INNOCENT, YOUR MAJESTY. WE HAVE BEEN CARRYING OUT VIKRAMARAYA'S ORDERS.
ASK HIM TO SEE ME AT ONCE.
THE BRAHMAN CONTINUED HIS STORY —
THE QUEEN MOTHER IS GLAD THAT THE KING HAS AT LAST ASSERTED HIS AUTHORITY BUT SHE IS AFRAID THAT VIKRAMARAYA MAY HARM HIM.


SHE CAN TRUST NO ONE IN THE CAPITAL. YOU ARE NOW HER ONLY HOPE.
BUT, ALAS, IT IS TOO LATE. THE KING IS DEAD.
DEAD!
YES, TWO MESSENGERS FROM VIKRAMA-RAYA JUST BROUGHT ME THE NEWS.
THEN THE QUEEN MOTHER'S WORST FEARS HAVE COME TRUE.
RANADHIRA WAS NOW CERTAIN THAT THE KING HAD BEEN A VICTIM OF FOUL PLAY.
VIKRAMARAYA! IF YOU HAVE HAD A HAND IN THIS EVIL DEED, YOU SHALL PAY FOR IT WITH YOUR LIFE.

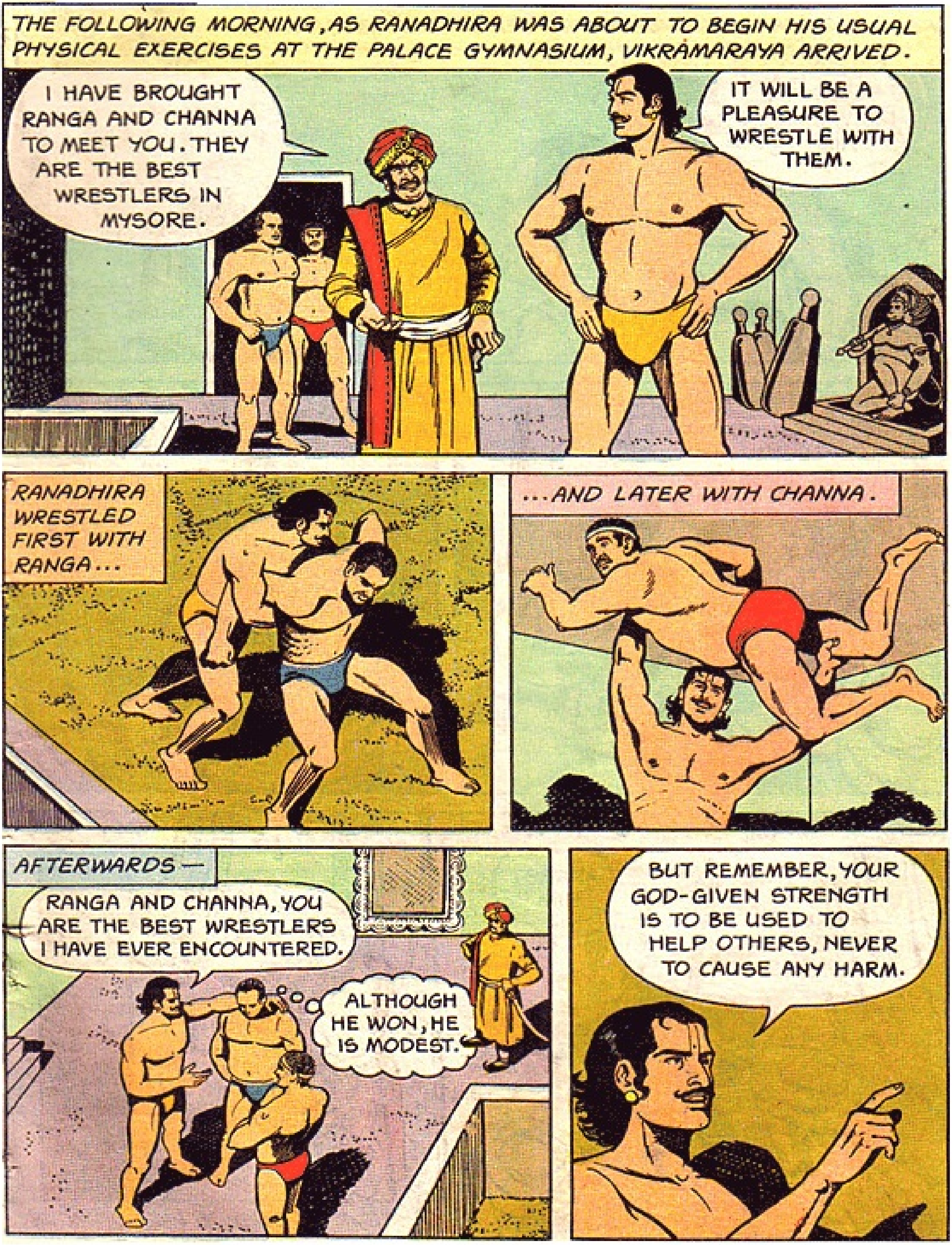

THE FOLLOWING DAY RANADHIRA LEFT FOR MYSORE. HE WAS RECEIVED BY VIKRAMARAYA ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF THE CITY.
WELCOME, PRINCE. MYSORE NEEDS YOU.
HE WAS TAKEN TO THE PALACE IN A PROCESSION —
THAT'S THE YOUNG PRINCE!
HAVE YOU HEARD OF HIS LATEST EXPLOITS?
YES! HE BEAT THE MIGHTY MAHAMALLA AT HIS OWN GAME!
AT THE PALACE —
I AM SURE THAT YOU WILL BE COMFORTABLE HERE, PRINCE.
BUT ONCE VIKRAMARAYA HAD RANADHIRA THERE —
AH! AT LAST I HAVE THE TIGER SAFE INSIDE THE CAGE!



RANADHIRA WAS VIRTUALLY A PRISONER IN THE PALACE.
TAKE ME TO THE QUEEN MOTHER'S CHAMBERS—NOW.
I CAN'T TAKE YOU THERE WITHOUT VIKRAMARAYA'S PERMISSION!
YOU WORM, HOW DARE YOU SAY THAT!
THOSE ARE VIKRAMARAYA'S ORDERS, PRINCE.
RANADHIRA WAS WILD WITH ANGER.
TELL VIKRAMA-RAYA THAT HE HOLDS HIS OFFICE AT MY PLEASURE.
HE STRODE OUT...
...AND CALLED ON THE LATE KING'S MOTHER.
SON, IF YOU ARE NOT CAREFUL, YOU WILL MEET THE SAME FATE AS YOUR COUSIN.
HOW DID MY COUSIN MEET HIS END?


THE QUEEN RECOUNTED THE SAD STORY.
WHEN MY SON RETURNED AFTER INSPECTING THE TREASURY, HE LOOKED VERY TIRED.
"I CALLED IN THE PHYSICIAN, BOMMARASA."
"HE PREPARED A MIXTURE."
THE KING WILL SOON BECOME BETTER AFTER HE TAKES THIS.
"BUT THE KING REFUSED TO TAKE IT."
YOUR MAJESTY, DRINK IT.
WHY ALL THIS FUSS? A DAY'S REST WILL CURE ME.


"I COMPELLED HIM TO DRINK IT."
DON'T REFUSE, SON. PLEASE TAKE THE MEDICINE.
ALL RIGHT, MOTHER. TO PLEASE YOU, I WILL.
"SOON AFTER TAKING THE MEDICINE HE CRIED OUT —"
MOTHER, I FEEL AS IF I'M ON FIRE! OH, I CAN'T STAND IT!
BOMMARASA, DO SOMETHING!
"BOMMARASA EXAMINED HIM."
I AM SORRY. THE KING IS DEAD.
OH, NO!
"EVEN IN MY SORROW, I SUSPECTED BOMMARASA."
LET THE DEAD KING BE WITNESS. TELL ME THE TRUTH BOMMARASA. WHAT DID YOU GIVE HIM TO DRINK?
I AM... SORRY. VIKRAMARAYA ORDERED ME TO GIVE HIM POISON.
OH, TO THINK THAT WITH MY OWN WRETCHED HAND I GAVE THE POISON TO MY SON!
MOTHER, DON'T CRY. THE CULPRIT WILL NOT GO UNPUNISHED.

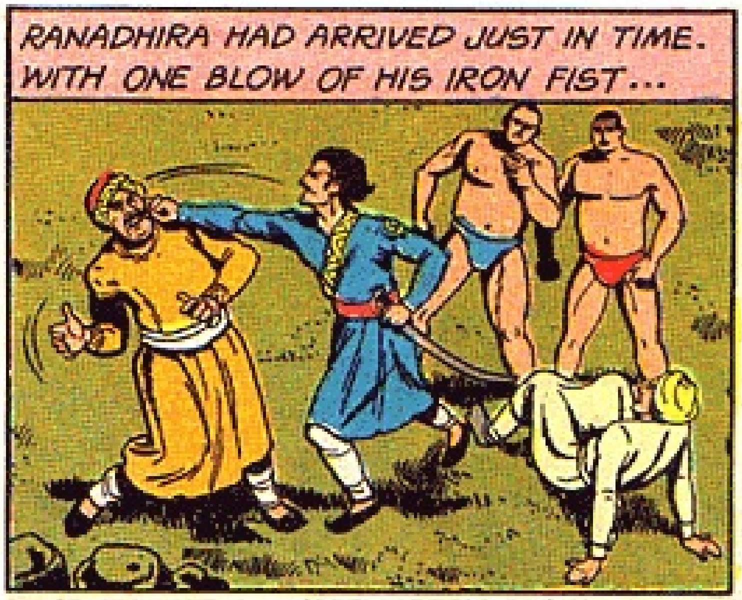

THE FOLLOWING MORNING, AS RANADHIRA WAS ABOUT TO BEGIN HIS USUAL PHYSICAL EXERCISES AT THE PALACE GYMNASIUM, VIKRAMARAYA ARRIVED.
I HAVE BROUGHT RANGA AND CHANNA TO MEET YOU. THEY ARE THE BEST WRESTLERS IN MYSORE.
IT WILL BE A PLEASURE TO WRESTLE WITH THEM.
RANADHIRA WRESTLED FIRST WITH RANGA...
...AND LATER WITH CHANNA.
AFTERWARDS —
RANGA AND CHANNA, YOU ARE THE BEST WRESTLERS I HAVE EVER ENCOUNTERED.
ALTHOUGH HE WON, HE IS MODEST.
BUT REMEMBER, YOUR GOD-GIVEN STRENGTH IS TO BE USED TO HELP OTHERS, NEVER TO CAUSE ANY HARM.


AS RANADHIRA LEFT FOR HIS CHAMBER, WITH VIKRAMARAYA —
RANGA, I FEEL DRAWN TO HIM.
YES, CHANNA, HE HAS OPENED MY EYES.
WHEN RANADHIRA REACHED HIS CHAMBER—
VIKRAMARAYA, I KNOW NOW HOW THE KING MET HIS END.
YES?
I DON'T WANT TO HAVE A MURDERER AS MY CHIEF MINISTER.
RANADHIRA SUMMONED THE GUARDS.
ARREST HIM!
BUT THE GUARDS DID NOT MOVE.

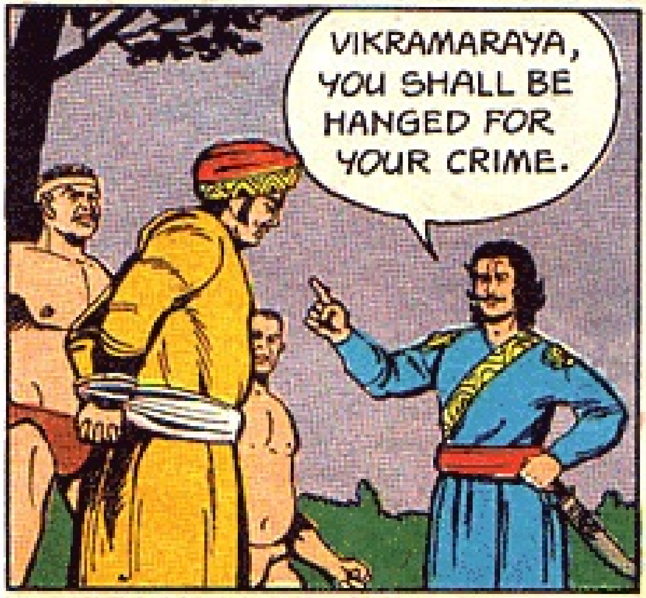

VIKRAMARAYA LAUGHED —
WELL, WHY DON'T YOU ARREST ME, MY PRINCE?
THEN HE WARNED RANADHIRA —
DON'T FORGET THAT YOU ARE NOT YET A KING — NOR WILL YOU EVER BE A KING!
WE SHALL SEE!
VIKRAMARAYA STEPPED OUT OF RANADHIRA'S CHAMBER AND LOCKED THE DOOR.
BE VIGILANT. THE TIGER IS ANGRY.
BUT THE CAGE IS STRONG, MY LORD.
LATER VIKRAMARAYA SENT FOR THE WRESTLERS.
GO TO RANADHIRA'S CHAMBER TONIGHT AND KILL HIM. I'LL ALSO BE THERE TO SEE HIM DIE.

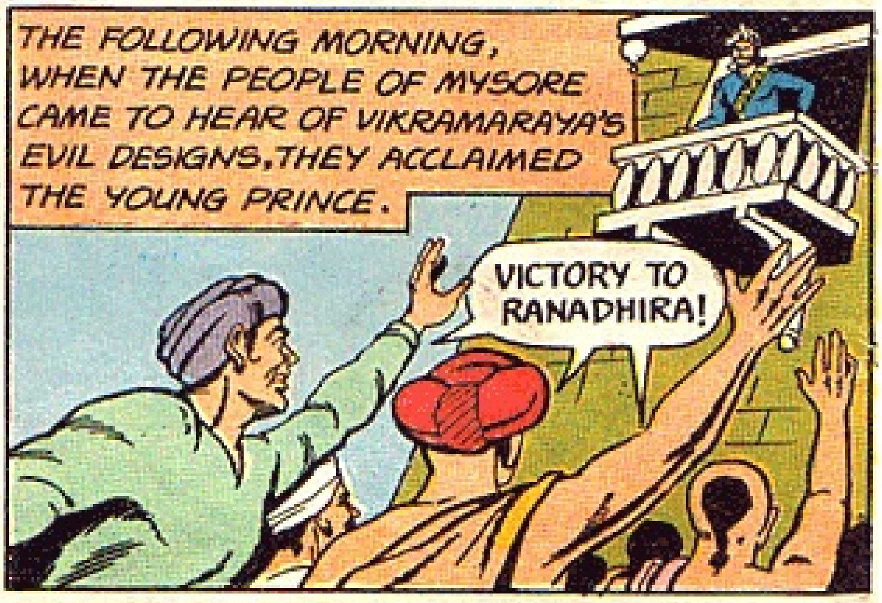

BUT RANGA AND CHANNA HAD OTHER PLANS.
YOU KNOW WHOM TO KILL TONIGHT?
YOU CAN COUNT ON ME.
THAT NIGHT, RANADHIRA, TOO, HAD MADE HIS OWN PLANS—
HE BENT THE WINDOW BARS APART...
...AND ESCAPED!
RANADHIRA THEN SET OUT FOR THE RESIDENCE OF VIKRAMARAYA.
VIKRAMARAYA HAS A SURPRISE IN STORE FOR HIM.

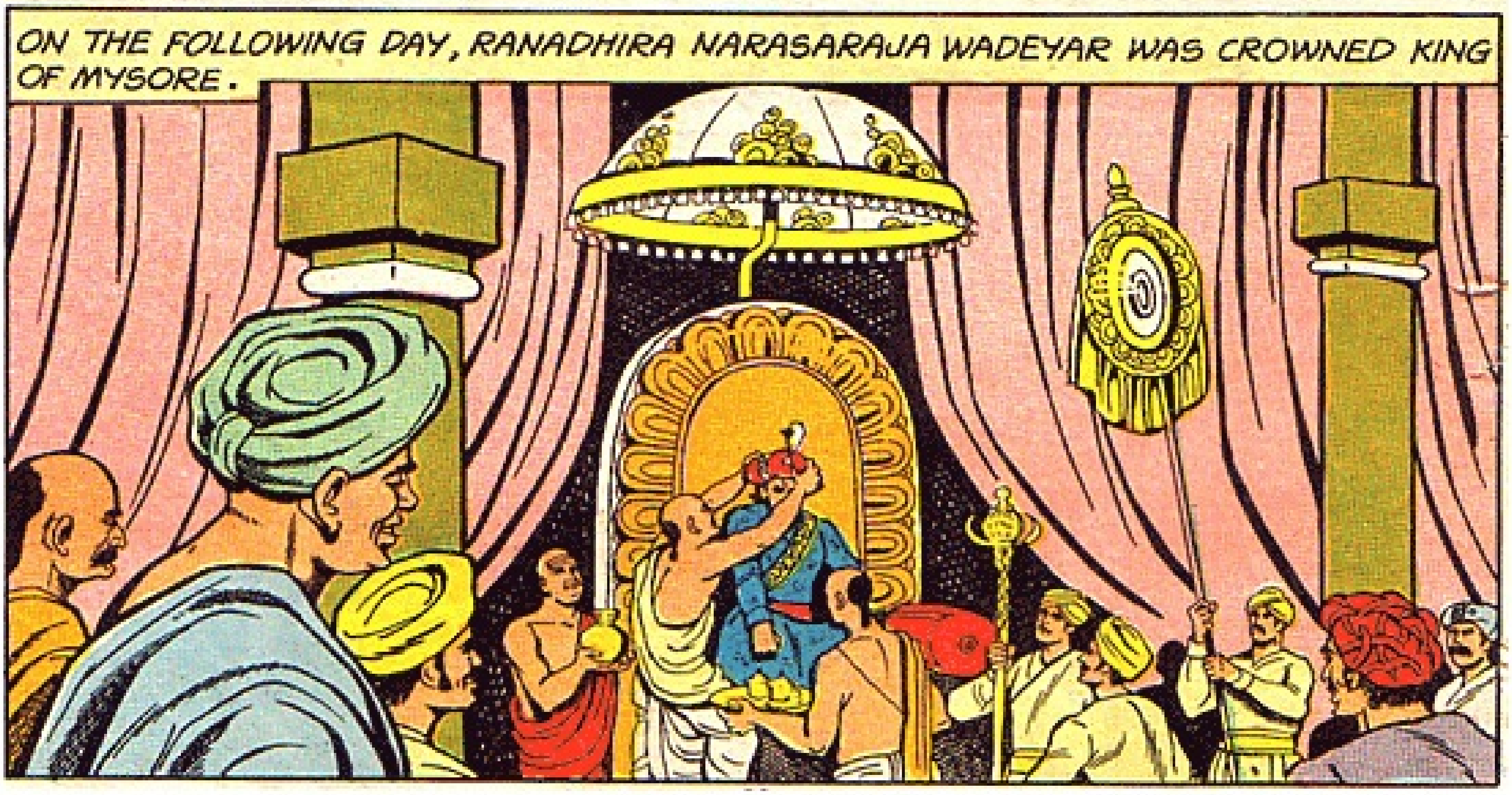

MEANWHILE RANGA AND CHANNA WERE WAITING AT VIKRAMARAYA'S RESIDENCE.
LOOK, VIKRAMARAYA HAS COME OUT.
I'LL TAKE HIM ON. YOU HANDLE THE TORCH-BEARER.
CHANNA, YOU?
HELP!


RANADHIRA HAD ARRIVED JUST IN TIME. WITH ONE BLOW OF HIS IRON FIST...


...HE OVERPOWERED VIKRAMARAYA.
HERE IS THE MAN WHO MURDERED YOUR KING. PUT HIM BEHIND BARS!

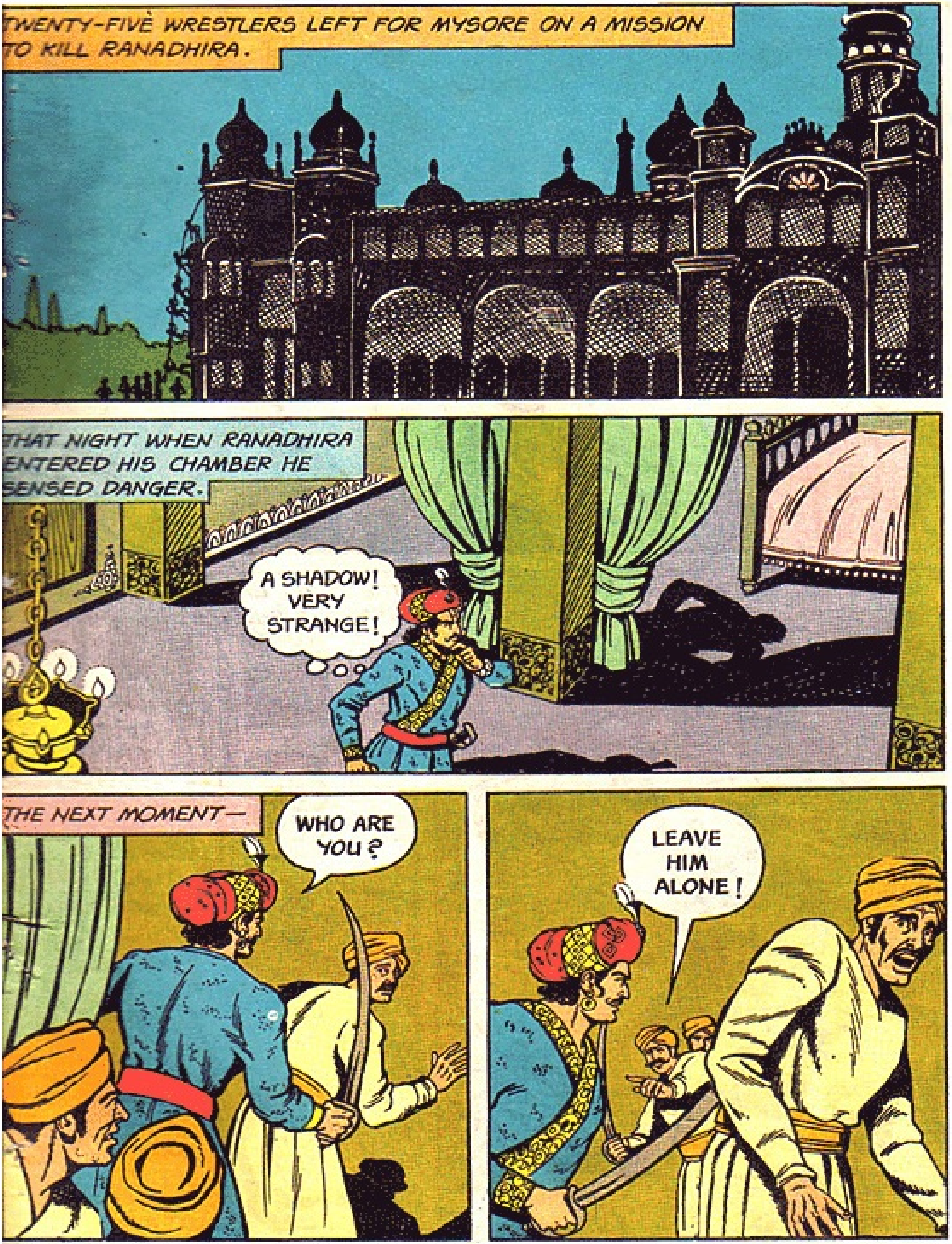

VIKRAMARAYA, YOU SHALL BE HANGED FOR YOUR CRIME.


THE FOLLOWING MORNING, WHEN THE PEOPLE OF MYSORE CAME TO HEAR OF VIKRAMARAYA'S EVIL DESIGNS, THEY ACCLAIMED THE YOUNG PRINCE.
VICTORY TO RANADHIRA!


ON THE FOLLOWING DAY, RANADHIRA NARASARAJA WADEYAR WAS CROWNED KING OF MYSORE.


WHEN THE NEWS REACHED THE SULTAN OF BIJAPUR—
THE NEW KING IS INEXPERIENCED. ISN'T THIS THE RIGHT TIME TO ATTACK MYSORE ?
YOU ARE CORRECT, RANADULLA KHAN. WE'LL ANNEXE MYSORE.
THE BIJAPUR ARMY, UNDER RANADULLA KHAN, STORMED SRIRANGA PATTAN, THE CAPITAL OF MYSORE.
THEY MADE A BREACH IN THE WALL OF THE FORT AND ENTERED THE CITY.
WE'RE VICTORIOUS!


BUT RANADHIRA MADE A BRAVE, FRONTAL ATTACK ON THE ENEMY...
...AND, TAKEN OFF GUARD, THEY RETREATED.
RUN!
FLEE!
MEANWHILE AT TIRUCHIRAPALLI—
THE WRESTLER WHO INSULTED US HAS NOW BECOME THE KING OF MYSORE. SEND OUR MEN TO MYSORE IN DISGUISE AND....



TWENTY-FIVE WRESTLERS LEFT FOR MYSORE ON A MISSION TO KILL RANADHIRA.
THAT NIGHT WHEN RANADHIRA ENTERED HIS CHAMBER HE SENSED DANGER.
A SHADOW! VERY STRANGE!
THE NEXT MOMENT—
WHO ARE YOU?
LEAVE HIM ALONE!


RANADHIRA WAS SOON SURROUNDED BY THE TWENTY-FIVE MEN.
BUT HE DID NOT FLINCH.
THE ROYAL GUARDS OUTSIDE HEARD THE NOISE.
AH-TAN-BANG-
WHAT'S THAT?
SOUNDS LIKE A FIGHT! LET'S GO!



* AN AVATAR OF VISHNU


BEWARE
scaN oR BE scanneD !
MEEWOW
An
Ajnaabi
anonymous
Preservation